DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 277 110 EA 019 021

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TITLE The Language of Supervision: Perspectives over Time.
PUB DATE Apr 86
NOTE 34p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (67th, San Francisco, CA, April 16-20, 1986).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Role; *Educational History; Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; Language Usage; Superintendents; *Teacher Administrator Relationship; *Teacher Supervision

ABSTRACT

This paper quotes liberally from writings on teacher supervision as it traces the history of attitudes toward the relationship between teachers and their supervisors from the middle 1800's to the present. The paper begins with the "Annual Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools of the State of New York" (1845), which reveals the simpler nature of the superintendency of its era while exhibiting the period's strong sense of mission and dedication to the improvement of education and teaching practice, all expressed in terms surprisingly similar to those used today. Other works by supervisors from the 1800's and early 1900's provide insight into the expanding role of the supervisor and simultaneously give further evidence that although the basic problems of supervision have remained the same over the years, the language used to address those problems and the emphasis placed on the problems have mirrored larger social trends. The rise of teacher militancy and the scientific management movement in the 20th century eliminated some of the complacency in the field, but despite the generation of new and varied technical terms for discussing the basic concepts used in supervision, the concepts have remained essentially the same. A four-page bibliography concludes the paper. (PGD)

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THE LANGUAGE OF SUPERVISION:

PERSPECTIVES OVER TIME[1]

by

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This paper is a brief inquiry into the intellectual history of the field of supervision of instruction. By intellectual history I mean the character of thought that is represented in the writings of supervisors and students of supervision over the years. My initial concept of this project proved to be much too ambitious in the sense of my being able to fit it in to other parts of my life. Thus, there will be times here when I will brush things too lightly, I am sure, and I hope the work will not suffer too much as a result. I ask the reader's pardon if it does. In any event, what I hope to be able to convey is that there is a history of thought connected with the field and that a glimpse of this history, if nothing else, can help practitioners (and professors, too) see themselves as part of a long chain (very loosely linked, I might add) of people who have been interested in improving the character of classroom instruction.

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[1] Prepared for presentation at the Convention of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April 1986.

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Some other prefatory comments are in order. First, the circumstances that led to the development of my interest in this topic were truly serendipitous. In the course of doing some background research on the superintendency, I was lucky to stumble across (through the good will of a student of mine) the annual report, dated 1845, of the Superintendent of Common Schools of the State of New York to the State Legislature. It is a bound volume of almost 500 pages about 400 of which are devoted to the narrative reports of all the city and county superintendents in the state. There are 56 of them in all. As I read through them, I was struck with the language that was used and the character of the concerns that these people had about education in general and the schools in particular. Most vividly, what I started to learn was that what got written about, many times, bore a close resemblance to the concerns of educational administrators and supervisors in the last quarter of the twentieth century. I was led to wonder in what manner people had written about problems of the supervision of instruction through the years.

Second, this wondering about the development of a language of supervision led me, of course, to our university library. It is a fine one but, as is the case of so many others, certain volumes are missing and others simply never were purchased. And though I wish I had been able to locate a few in addition to what was there, my sense of things is that what I would have found would have taken the form of elaboration on existing ideas and not new ones.

Third, I am not an historian. What follows then, while historical in nature, would probably not pass muster as a piece of systematic historical research. But that is not its intent. Rather,

it's intent is, hopefully, to pique the interest of students and practitioners, as was mine piqued, concerning a sort of intellectual and professional heritage to which we all owe some degree of homage.

We must start out with the not surprising understanding that the early days of school district organization was much different than it is today. Schools were organized and operated by lay committees that had authority over and responsibility for just about every aspect of school functioning. They both made and administered policy. As the population grew so did the schools and it became clear that the educational enterprise was simply becoming too large and complex for lay committees to continue to function as they had. Enter the superintendent -- but not the supervisor as we know it today -- in the middle 1830's. Early superintendents, especially in the cities, have been described (Mosher, 1977) as <u>factotums</u>. They seem to have been, in good part, glorified clerks who relieved the lay school boards of burdensome and time-consuming record-keeping.

There was, however, more to it than that if we can use as a measure the <u>Annual Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools of State of New York</u> (1845) referred to above. Superintendents were to visit every school in their jurisdiction, "to inquire into all matters related to the government, course of instruction, books, studies, discipline, and conduct of such schools and the condition of the school houses and districts generally" (p. 8). They also had responsibility for the examination, certification, hiring and firing of teachers and "generally, by all means in his power to promote sound education, elevate the character and quality of teachers, improve the means of instruction and advance the interests of the schools

committed to their charge" (pp. 8-9).

Being an early superintendent, then, was a mixed bag. He (and they were all men) had no management authority but apparently did have very direct authority over teachers and, as we shall see, a sort of supervisory responsibility for instruction that is not unfamiliar today.

What was the language they used to describe their activities? Space here prohibits an analysis in depth, but the flavor of it all will become clear in what follows. For the most part, they wrote about the qualifications of teachers, methods of instruction, the physical condition of schools, in-service and staff development (though not in those terms), direct supervision of teachers, textbooks, financial problems, and the low pay of teachers. They also wrote of parental apathy, community resistance to the schools, and much more. And interestingly, they frequently wrote of the schools and education in salvational terms -- the future of this still young country was wholly dependent on the quality of the education it provided its young. For example, in one section of the Report, the State Superintendent suggests that South American countries had not fulfilled their obligations to educate their children and "have fallen into revolutionary decrepitude, and degenerated into military despotisms" (p. 18). He then goes on to say:

> On the careful cultivation in our schools, of the minds of the young, the entire success or absolute failure of the great experiment of self-government, is wholly dependent; and unless that cultivation is increased, and made more effective than it has been, the conviction is solemnly

> impressed by the signs of the times, that the American Union, now the asylum of the oppressed, and "home of the free," will, ere long, share the melancholy fate of every former attempt at self-government.....The only salvation for the republic is to be sought for in our schools (pp. 18-19).

This is pretty heady stuff and might bring on a smile or two from the reader. But this same reader might do well to recall the very recent report of the National Committee on Excellence in Education (1983), entitled A Nation at Risk and its most frequently quoted sentence, "If an unfriendly nation had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war" (p.5). Though the Report does not speak of the risk to the future of our form of government being at stake with regard to the quality of our schools and the commitment our society has to them, there appears to be little doubt that they see our future economic well-being as dependent on this quality and commitment. Salvation by any other name is salvation. In either case, what an incredible burden to contemplate!

So much for preamble. Let us move to the words of the county superintendents on New York in 1845. They were the ones, after all, who were doing the supervising. What follows are a number of sentences or phrases that convey the manner in which these people thought about the supervision of instruction, their attitudes about it, their problems and so forth. It needs to be said, in addition, that the content and the tenor of these examples were repeated many times. They are not isolated and lonely comments.

- ...as is supervision so will be the schools; if the schools have not begun to show improvement, their condition pronounces the condemnation of their superintendents (p. 65).
- "Search creation round" and where do we find a station more responsible them that which the teacher occupies? On whom devolve responsibilities more fearful, or duties more sacred? (p. 73)
- Teachers and schools had been neglected. No encouragement had been held out to teachers to excel at their profession (p. 88).
- The method of instruction has become less fixed and mechanical, and has assumed more of the intellectual style. Textbooks are used more as intermediary helps....Instruction to children and youth must be made an agreeable and welcome exercise...(p. 117).
- ...and the life-giving energy of a general supervision is beginning to be felt, by teachers and pupils....Scholars are taught understandingly, and consequently take a much deeper interest in their studies (p. 88).
- Apt to teach, or an ability to impart instruction properly to children, by adapting their instruction to the capacity of their pupils is an important qualification for teachers to possess. More knowledge without the ability to communicate it understandingly to children, will be of little use....(p. 140).

- In some schools the "answer," so far as the study of arithmetic is concerned, is the only thing sought, and when obtained the task is considered done (p. 158).
- Of the first class of teachers, I am happy to say that they are an honor to the profession in which they are engaged...and to tell one of the secrets of their success, they endeavor to make the interests of their pupils their interests (p. 121).
- ...the husbandman, to succeed, must and does cooperate with God....So should the educator ascertain the laws of the mind, and conform to them, and strive to aid their development; otherwise, instead of cooperating with God, he mars God's noblest work; and this is perpetually being done under the name of teaching (p. 165).
- In many schools, the old and almost useless method of teaching everything "by rote" is fast giving way to the inductive and analytical system of instruction. Children are taught that they are intellectual beings; that they are endowed with capacities and powers of mind...(p. 265).

There is a certain richness and emotional tone to these comments that I, for one find refreshing. One is not left in doubt about the value that these people placed on their own job. "As is supervision so will be the schools," says one and another speaks of "the life-giving energy of a general supervision." Both of these comments would provoke cynical smiles among many of today's teachers. But that is not the point. The point is, rather, that there is a sense of a calling to the role of supervisor. It is not merely a job. It is a

position on which, or so it seems, the very future of education depends. And though that interpretation may be a little far-fetched, it is important to understand that the schools of a century-and-a-half ago did not enjoy universal community support (does this sound familiar?) nor, by a long shot, were teachers highly trained. So, while acknowledging the critical importance of the skillful teacher -- "On whom devolve responsibilies more fearful, or duties more sacred?" -- it was the supervisors who held things together and on whom, ultimately, success or failure depended. They were the ones who certified, hired and fired.

The comment concerning the lack of encouragement for teachers to excel is one that was repeated any number of times. The usual reference is to teachers' salaries, community support, or both. There is a clear echo of these thoughts in 1985. A difference is, though, that those who raise these issues today, as a rule, are teachers or their associations and not supervisors or superintendents. The latter, it might be said, seem caught in somewhat of a bind. While most would support teaching excellence with higher salaries, they are also charged with keeping the budget and, thus, the tax rate as low as possible. This seemed not to be an issue with the people we are concerned with here who over and over again publicly bemoaned and criticized the miserliness of the public.

Relative to their thoughts on teaching methods and the classroom behavior of teachers, we have echoes once more. Notice the educational theory: "Instruction...must be made an agreeable and welcome exercise;" "Mere knowledge without the ability to communicate it understandingly to children will be of little use;" "they endeavor

to make the interests of their pupils their interests;" "the old and almost useless method of teaching everything 'by rote' is fast giving way to the inductive and analytical system of instruction." And congruently there is the criticism that in some schools the only thing that is held to be important is arriving at the correct answer regardless of the thinking process involved. Finally, there is the interesting comment, related, I think, to the idea of the schools being a sacred enterprise, that the "laws of the mind" were God-given, much as were those of farming; that heeding them was a symptom of cooperating with God; and that not to heed them was more or less blasphemy.

We can be either amused, somewhat taken aback by all this, or have a myriad of reactions in between. Regardless, what is more to the point for our purposes here is to try and understand what the language conveys. Clearly, as we have noted, there is a sense of a sacred commitment to it all. These men seemed to have an intense and almost religious feeling about their work. They wrote in both tender and biting words. Their sense of what should occur in a classroom and how teachers should behave toward pupils was humanistic and certainly mirrors much pedagogical thinking of today. They were much concerned with the three R's (though I have not included such comments) and they were also concerned with how the three R's were taught. They appeared to have a great deal of faith in the desire of teachers to be better if they could be shown better ways to do things -- "The inventive genius of our teachers is becoming aroused, and they are, very cautiously, however, venturing to leave the rotary (learning by rote) track of their predecessors" (p. 345). And, finally, they were

optimistic and had confidence in themselves and their ability to help teachers change:

> Some of our old teachers...who imagined themselves masters of their trade, have recently found out their mistake....One remarked to me not long since, "I have kept school a great many winters, but now I am going to see if I cannot teach school" (p. 268).

According to its author, William H. Payne, Professor of Science and Art of Teaching at the University of Michigan, the first book on supervision was published in 1875. It was entitled School Supervision. It was written from the point of view of and based on his experience as a "superintendent of a school system such as is found in the smaller cities of this country" (p. vii). The reader should continue to bear in mind that being a school superintendent in 1875 bore little resemblance to the demands of that position today.

Payne's argument on the functioning of supervision was based clearly on a hierarchy of command and the division of labor:

> It is thus seen that the work of instruction follows the law which prevails in all other industries -- differentiation, classification, system...in an extended system of instruction there should be a responsible head, able to devise plans in general and in detail, and vested with sufficient authority to keep all subordinates in their proper places, and at their assigned tasks (p. 17).

Further, he saw the division of labor as characterologically based: "Most men work after prescribed rules. It is easier to follow the footsteps of others than to beat a new path for ourselves. Some,

however, are most naturally employed in organizing, planning, and supervising. This difference is constitutional" (pp. 17-18).

Collegially, to make an obvious point, seemed not to be part of Payne's thinking. Nor should it necessarily have been, given the time at which he was writing. But lest the reader infer Payne's position on the supervision of teachers dictatorial, if not despotic, the following rather lengthy quotations should get the matter straight:

> THE INDEPENDENCE OF TEACHERS -- To what extent should the superintendent interfere with teachers in their work? The general principle is easily stated. Teachers are to be held responsible for the quality of their instruction and discipline, and should be allowed to follow their own methods so far as is consistent with general requirements. The seating of pupils, their manner of coming to the place of recitation; special means of securing order in the room, and other items of similar character should be entrusted to the teacher's judgment. Within her room, the teachers should be mistress of the situation; and only under extraordinary circumstances has the superintendent a right to make direct interference. The individual rights of the teacher should be as clearly recognized as those of the superintendent or of the Board. Good teachers will do more work, and of better quality, if confidence is reposed in their judgment and discretion. The superintendent is in duty bound to proffer suggestions and advice when they are known to be needed; but in many cases it is best to go no further. Where there is no violation of established

> principles, it is well to allow considerable latitude of judgment, and to wait for results before making direct interference. Teachers are not to be transformed into mere automata, but are to be credited with good intentions, and helped to become efficient co-laborers, while retaining all proper freedom of thought and action. Perpetual interference in minor matters, which will usually work their own cure, is a capital fault in school management. A school should be a republic, not a despotism; an organic whole, animated by self-active centers, not a dead machine, kept in motion by external force. Hold teachers responsible for results, aid them by suggestion and advice, and allow them all possible freedom in developing their plans and methods.
>
> The same principle should be observed in assisting teachers as in assisting pupils. Indirect help is best. They are most truly aided who are put in the way of aiding themselves. In the case of teachers, this principle is of peculiar importance. A teacher's methods should have a large element of personality in them -- they can not be copied bodily from others. The uniformities which are desirable are typical merely (pp. 70-71).

What, then, is Payne telling us? From his prior comments one gets the image of rigidity of organization and thought -- a place for everyone and everyone in his or her place seems to be the message. Further, certain skills and predispositions reside constitutionally in some people that don't in others and one would judge that Payne didn't

think that those of lesser skill could attain a higher level.

This rigidity of thought, though, seems to evaporate to a large extent when he writes of the direct relationships between the supervisor and teacher. His statement concerning "The Independence of Teachers" seems almost a classic enunciation of academic freedom. Teachers should teach the way they are most comfortable, but they "are to be held responsible for the quality of their instruction and discipline." They "are not to be transformed into were automata" so that they will teach the way the supervisor wants them to. Further, though suggestions and advice may be given, the decision of whether or not to use it is up to the teacher. Results are what count. And the school? "A school should be a republic...an organic whole."

One certainly is given pause to wonder. With the exception of his very sharp leader-follower dichotomy, Payne's ideas over 100 years ago would constitute a fair enough prospectus for our thinking about supervisors and teachers today. One thing is missing, though, that we found among the supervisors who wrote just 30 years prior to Payne. There is nowhere to be found in his book any reference to the sacredness of the educational mission. Nor is there mentioned any sense of the supervisor responding to a calling. It is all set down in a rather matter of fact manner. This is the way things should be done, period.

We are all children of our times, of course. And what we write reflects those times. The idea of common or public schools of 1845 was still a new one. They had a mission which was to educate children and thus ensure an enlightened public that would perpetuate the republic. Thirty years later this was less of an issue, at least as

we can judge from Payne. His writings reflect a concern with record-keeping, organizing and productivity. (In fact, the publisher of his book offered to sell copies of several forms he includes for the price of $1.67 per hundred.) The public school enterprise, though certainly still in its childhood, was an established fact. It was less in need of messianic fervor than it was organization. The enterprise was a business to be run like others.

The business-like, but not inhumane, attitude that seems to characterize Payne's book is further reflected in his comments about the way a supervisor should help a teacher.

> THE ASSISTANCE WHICH SHOULD BE RENDERED TO TEACHERS -- Whenever it is seen that a teacher is making a radical mistake which will compromise her success, a full and frank statement of the fact is required, and such helps should be given as the case seems to demand. No false delicacy should tempt one to withhold a candid opinion as to the nature and consequences of glaring faults. Otherwise, when disaster has come, and the teacher has forfeited her place, there is just ground for charging the superintendent with neglect of duty; for it is plain that skillful supervision ought to diminish the chances of failure. The superintendent ought to be a teacher of teachers, competent to detect the probable causes of failure, and able to suggest means which may avert disaster. This course is of special importance in the case of inexperienced teachers, whom judicious criticism and skillful assistance may save from undeserved failure. In too many instances teachers

> are allowed to fail. The danger is seen, but no warning is given, no advice proffered; when, suddenly, the teacher is overwhelmed with failure, and can not resist the feeling that she has been unfaithfully treated. Great good often comes from allowing teachers to exchange visits. In this way, individual excellencies become common property, and faults, seen in others, become noticeable and are shunned (pp. 72-74).

Again, we have a century-old statement of philosophy and practice that makes as much sense today, perhaps more so, as it did then. It is quite prescriptive, but it is also caring. What Payne is saying is that if supervisors really did their job, a lot of grief could be avoided. When a teacher fails, it is really the supervisor who is at fault for not having been on top of the situation and been open with the teacher about it. Note the phrasing, "No false delicacy should tempt one to withhold a candid opinion as to the nature and consequence of glaring faults."

Note again at whose feet the ultimate responsibility rests, according to Payne, when a teacher fails. It is the supervisor's for having failed to be candid with the teacher. In a sense what he is saying is that anyone can learn to be a good teacher if that person receives the kind of help -- honest feedback, we call it today -- about what he or she is doing wrong. On the one hand, this point of view oversimplifies teaching. On the other, it attributes more wisdom and skill to supervision than seems to be warranted. Regardless, Payne put his finger on an issue that the field of supervision seems to suffer from today, the hesitancy for administrators and supervisors

in the schools to be open and forthright about what they perceive to be shoddy teaching.

In 1888, the annual convention of the National Education Association was held in San Francisco. J.M. Greenwood, Superintendent of Schools in Kansas City, Missouri, delivered a paper entitled "Efficient School Supervision" (pp. 519-523).[1] Greenwood was a well-known man in the field of education and we quote from his talk at some length on the idea that his thoughts probably had an impact on his colleagues.

> Going into a school, I try to put aside everything like authority, or superiority, and to approach the teacher in a proper spirit of helpfulness. Then, I endeavor to see the school from the teacher's standpoint, and, if necessary, to have the teacher see her school as it appears to me (pp. 519-520).

The second sentence of this quotation is almost startling in its clarity concerning the ingredients of what might be conceived to be a productive supervisory relationship. It implies a sort of connectedness between supervisor and teacher. There is a whisper of collegiality attached to it. If we can believe what many teachers of today tell us about their supervision this connectedness tends to be missing. Greenwood then goes on to describe "What to Do?"

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1 The term "efficient" in those days had a different meaning than it does today. It was taken to mean effective and had nothing to do with the way we now think of the "efficient" use of resources, for example.

WHAT TO DO? 1. I go in quietly. 2. I watch the teacher and pupils awhile, usually until the novelty wears off. 3. Sometimes I conduct a recitation, with the teacher's permission, and thus bring out points in which she may be deficient; or, simply to test the knowledge that the pupils have of the subject. 4. If suggestions should be made to the teacher, I do so privately, or request her to call after school. 5. Depending upon the peculiarities of the teacher, the conversation must be directed in such a way as to benefit her. If the teacher be "heady," frequently the most efficacious remedy is to let her alone for a few days, and when her room is badly demoralized, help her straighten it out. Of a dozen teachers in a building, no two can be helped precisely alike. I think the question may be put in this form: Given the teacher, the school, the defects; how to improve them?

Knowing the teacher, the school, the defects, improvement depends upon the skill of the superintendent and the tact of the teacher to apply the proper remedies. If the teacher is deficient in natural and acquired qualifications, or the superintendent does not know what to do, and how to do it, one or both would do well to seek employment elsewhere (p.520).

We must understand that a rather accepted part of a supervisor's role in the days we are writing about here was what Greenwood indicated in Item 3 -- to conduct recitations in order to model better

teaching methods or simply to test the knowledge of students. (This was also true of the role of our supervisors of 1845.) Two other points in "What to Do?", however, seem more powerful in their impact. The first has to do with the idea that "no two can be helped precisely alike. Individual differences have been with us a long time and Greenwood seemed to have a sense of the need for supervisors to be very much aware of the "pecularities" of each teacher that might affect the way feedback was given. The second point had to do with "Given the teacher, the school, the defects; how to improve them?" I may be reading too much into this, but it does seem to be the first time that one gets a sense of the potential organizational impact on a teacher's behavior. Not only does the supervisor need to pay attention to the teacher as an individual, but to the organizational environment in which he or she is working. At least so said Mr. Greenwood in 1888. He then went on to discuss

> SIGNS TO LOOK FOR. 1. Common sense. 2. Good health. 3. General scholarship. 4. Critical knowledge of the branches. 5. Order. 6. Ability to manage hard cases. 7. Power to teach. 8. Power to develop thought in the pupils. 9. Routine teaching. 10. "Reciting-post" teaching. 11. Skill in questioning. 12. Skill in fertility of resources. 13. Energy and vigilance properly directed. 14. Pleasant voice. 15. Disposition to antagonize pupils. 16. Power to gain the good-will of children without spoiling them. 17. Disposition to scold and to grumble. 18. Attention to pupils reciting and also to those at their seats. 19. Neatness and cleanliness of

room, desks, etc. 20. Ability to secure cheerful and thorough work by the pupils. 21. The tendency to waste time doing nothing laboriously. 22. Variableness in teaching. 23. Steadfastness of purpose in teaching. 24. Disposition to take care of school property. 25. Ventilation of school-room, and looking after the children's health. 26. Tact and skill in adapting new methods in teaching. 27. Originality in management and in methods (p.520).

What we have here is, perhaps, one of the earliest codified classroom observation instruments. At least it's the earliest I found in my readings. I don't want to make too much of it except for a couple of things. First, it seems to me that I have been asked to complete recommendation forms for would-be teachers that contain many of the same items. Has nothing changed? Second, and more important, numbers of the items contain insights into classroom observation that have as much pertinence today as they did 100 years ago. I must say that Item 21, in particular, fascinated me for its subtle insight: "The tendency to waste time doing nothing laboriously." This is a skill that teachers say, if they confide in you, can become highly developed. It involves not working but conveying the impression that you are.

There was a discussion, with some disagreement, held after Greenwood delivered his paper. A Mr. Chidester of Wichita, in particular, took issue with the supervisor spending so much time in classrooms. His contention was that the supervisor's skill would so outshine the teacher's that the results would be detrimental to

teachers and pupils. He said

> ...such transcendent brightness in the superintendent would so blind the pupils that they would be unable to see the regular teacher -- a calamity not altogether unknown in the annals of school history, as it is, and which, to say the least, would be out of harmony with my ideas of the best plan for school supervision....Having once enjoyed the benign influence of his presence, pupils and teachers would be unable to proceed very fast or very certainly under the light of their own faculties alone.

and

> Now right here I take occasion that a superintendent can be too great. The school is lost sight of in gazing at him....
>
> Instead of being a blazing sun conspicuous above all others for brilliancy, for trying to light up everything by direct radiation of his lustre, he should be more of a dynamo, a power to make light for others, but not himself to shine (p.124).

Present day teachers would undoubtedly share much laughter over these ideas. But again, Chidester was a child of his own time and circumstance. And that time and circumstance may well have provided him with the experience that led to his statement about the vast superiority of a supervisor's teaching skill as compared with a teacher's.

Supervisors were so much better, in fact, that to serve as a

model for teachers would have a deleterious effect on the teachers and the pupils. Better to serve as an unseen motivating power -- a dynamo in the system. Chidester does not tell us how this is supposed to happen, but in a way, his thoughts may contain the seeds of the concept of the central office staff of a school system that would be composed of lesser educational luminaries than the superintendent.

School Supervision by J.L. Pickard was published in 1890. Pickard had been Superintendent of Schools in Chicago, State Superintendent in Wisconsin, and President of the State University of Iowa. Like Payne in our earlier discussion, he likens schools to other work organizations and justifies the need for supervision on a sort of immutable law of the division of labor. Further, if anything, the need for close supervision of teachers is greater than that in the case of industrial workers because "For manual labor there is a rapidly growing substitution of machinery" (p. 2). Pickard also had little doubt about the highly productive outcomes that would occur if exceptionally talented teachers became supervisors. "Let such a one be placed where his power will be felt and his influence multiplied a hundred-fold, and the uplift of a hundred schools will more than atone for the loss of his service to one" (p. 3).

The book, whose purpose was "to give such hints as may prove helpful to those who undertake the work of supervision" (p. v) is wide-ranging in its concerns. As a sample of its contents, it includes chapters on the history of school supervision, state, county and city supervision, the relation of the superintendent to pupils, teachers, parents, the Board of Education, promotions and gradation and the course of study. There are also chapters on physical and moral

training and, interestingly, the final chapter is entitled "What Shall We Do with our Boys?" in which Pickard suggests that boys are predisposed to mischief.

Of particular interest to our purpose is Pickard's chapter entitled "Superintendent's Relation to Teachers" (p. 49-68). Within that chapter, under the subtitle of "Helpfulness," are some remarks that layout the relationship in no uncertain terms:

> The work of instruction, specially, is shared by superintendent and teachers. He is the controlling spirit, they execute; he the general in command, they the rank and file; he plans, they execute. Under such conditions, the superintendent's helpfulness will appear in manifold ways, as does that of a great military leader....His recognized leadership, his confidence, his patience, his justice, together render him exceedingly helpful (pp. 62-63).

This all seems to be rather cut and dried, and nothing if not a militaristic idea of how schools and teachers should be organized and supervised. It is almost a classic statement of a paternalistic and benevolent autocracy. But that is not all there is to it. Some seeming contradictions (but they really are not) in the argument appear in some of Pickard's comments that follow what seems to be a rather rigid stance. The following quotations (pp. 63-64) make the point:

> Whether helpful or not depends upon the cooperation of the would-be helper and the would-be helped. The receptive teacher must be free to act after his own will....His freedom, however, is within limits prescribed by higher

authority.

> The superintendent must recognize the authority of the teacher within his province as being as sacred as his own.
>
> ...if he (the supervisor) exercises that right (to do certain unquestioned things) without regard to the teacher's right to be consulted upon the matter, he does a wrong....
>
> Neither may enter the peculiar domain of the other without conference and consent.

The reason that these statements which seem to contradict Pickard's earlier militaristic view of the supervisor-teacher relationship really don't is based precisely on that view of organizational relationships. That is, the benevolent autocrat sets the basic structure according to what he or she thinks are to the best interests of the organization and the individual. Within that structure certain kinds of freedoms are granted, but it is the autocrat who decides what those freedoms are and when they have been violated. Pickard recognized this, of course. He also recognized the idiosyncratic nature of teaching and the need for teachers to exercise their individuality -- but, always, so it seems, within the pre-set boundaries, such boundaries to be determined by the supervisor. Regardless, as we have noted previously, the idea of territorial prerogatives among school personnel and the autonomy of teachers are ones that made their appearance early on in the literature of school

supervision.

It needs to be said as, figuratively, we approach the twentieth century in this paper, that the themes that have been noted in the language of supervisors thus far were not isolated examples. To the contrary, over and over again one may read of the unquestioned value of supervision, the notion that some are born to lead and others to follow, the superior teaching skill of supervisors, the autonomy of teachers, and the care that needed to be taken by a supervisor as he observed and talked with a teacher. There simply seemed to be little doubt in the minds of people who wrote and spoke about supervision that it was a most efficacious process, and that if there were problems with it, they rested with the teacher, for the most part, and not the supervisor (and one might add, today's supervisors would likely react and assess their jobs in much the same way).

For whatever reasons, little seems to have been written about instructional supervision over the first two decades of this century. At least, that's the impression one gets from reading the tables of contents of the proceedings of the annual NEA conventions. What did appear seemed more or less to reinforce what had previously been written concerning the responsibilities of supervision and methods of fulfilling them. Everything was okay in "supervision-land" and where it wasn't what was required was more dedication. We do find, though, in 1913 (Hunter, F., p.307) the thought that "The supervisor...becomes responsible for the professional growth of the teacher under his charge. If he is a supervisor of a special subject, he expects to find new teachers...; but from this point forward he is responsible for their technical improvement." And we also find in that year

(Clark, p. 307), as he writes about the employment qualifications of supervisors, that "Most important is the scientific attitude toward education."

As I indicated above, though, things seemed to be working as they were intended, at least from the point of view of those who wrote about supervision, the supervisors. A variant opinion, however, was raised in 1919 by Sallie Hill, President of the League of Teacher Associations in Colorado. She spoke at the Convention that year and the tone and content of her remarks was in sharp contrast to those we have previously seen. Her paper was entitled "Defects of Supervision and Constructive Suggestions Thereon." With a focus on elementary schools, in modern slang she "told it like it is."

A condensation of some of her thoughts is as follows: The system of supervision was responsible for the lack of cheerfulness, hopefulness and initiation among teachers. There could be no democracy in the schools because too much power was given to supervisors. A supervisory certificate does not fit a person without experience to be a supervisor. Supervisors should pay less attention to a lesson plan and more to the effect of teaching upon the class. Too much is demanded by the system of the teacher. One of the reasons the system is tottering is because there are too many supervisors with big salaries and undue rating power. Let principals be selected on experience and training and not on degrees. Sallie Hill's recommendation was pretty much to junk the whole system and devise different ways of helping teachers. She finished her remarks with the following rather poignant paragraph:

I am glad that I have had an opportunity to say these

> things for my own class of teachers, and if only one superintendent here goes home with a little better understanding of our side of the case, something has been gained for us. I believe that the time has come to speak freely of these matters to those who have the power to change conditions which are so burdensome to us, that the time has come to speak the truth frankly, for when you shall see the truth, the truth shall make us free (p.309).

Despite her obvious passion and concern, one would doubt that Sallie Hill's talk had much effect on the superintendents who gathered to hear her. It was more or less a voice in the wilderness. What did have an effect on them, though, and ultimately of the field of supervision, was the developing "science" of education (recall Clark's comment), particularly as it was influenced by the scientific management movement in industry, as Callahan (1962) has so ably documented. No longer were the statements of supervisors to be taken as evidence that all was well in their particular part of the world. For example, Buckingham (1922) in an early issue of the Educational Research Bulletin in which he proposed a research design for testing the effects of supervision also noted:

> Supervision, according to those who supervise, is important, valuable, and necessary. "No system of schools can be run adequately without supervision." But according to some of those who have been supervised, supervision is not what it is intended to be, or again, it has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Thus the results of the opinion method depend on whose opinion is being

taken (p. 123).

Empiricism was to reign supreme. Indeed, Cubberley (1916) had predicted that by about 1930 most of the pressing problems in education would have succumbed to the methodology of the social scientist. Scientifically we would discover the proper laws of supervision; scientifically they would be applied. Collings (1927), in the Introduction to his book School Supervision in Theory and Practice, made the point a few years later:

> ...education, teaching, and supervision, each is interpreted as the process of creating, changing, growing....An attempt is made to harness scientific procedure in the practice of this history. Scientific measures are employed to reveal lines of teacher improvement and scientific method is utilized in effecting the improvement of teaching along these lines. ....The improvement advocated has been experimentally tested over a period of years....(viii-ix).

Supervision as an applied science seems to have been off and running. Both the classroom and supervision were to be subjected to measurement. Indeed, there are six chapters in the book whose first words are "The Criterion of..." In addition, we find The Activity Score Card, The Activity Index Card and The Improvement Chart to be used as both direct and indirect measures of a variety of teaching problems. Scientific management, it seems, had found its way into the classroom. But we hasten to say that if today we are inclined to smile about it, it does not appear at all that Collings was inhumane or quite mechanical about it all. He had a deep concern for the

growth and development of students, teachers and supervisors. He, like so many of his colleagues, was committed to logical-positivism and empirical inquiry in order to further his goals.

If anyone had any doubts that a scientific approach to supervision was setting down roots, they wold be dispelled by Barr's (1931) book An Introduction to the Scientific Study of Classroom Supervision. Barr's purposes were more wide-ranging than Collings. He used an extensive bibliography by which to build his case for the development of an "...integrated program of supervision utilizing the results of scientific research in the field of supervision, and modeled on the simple pattern of science" (v). One is left in little doubt that science is "in" and though some useful opinions may be had, they are definitely on the way "out."

Given time and space constraints, I move toward the conclusion of this paper in a way that may violate some reader's sense of the appropriate but which, nevertheless, makes sense to me and, I think, fits with the idea of "The Language of Supervision." What I simply will do is to list the titles of a number of books on supervision that have been written since Barr's. The books chosen were selected for the language and thought implied in their titles and not for their content. That is, I leave out a large number of books (for example, Wiles' (1953) Supervision for Better Schools) whose titles are not particularly descriptive of the concept of supervision that may be discussed in the book, though the book itself may be very worthwhile. What we have, then, is Supervision as Guidance (Helseth, 1946), Supervision: Democratic Leadership in the Improvement of Learning (Barr, 1947), Supervision as Human Relations (Bartky, 1953),

Democratic Supervision in Secondary Schools (Boardman, 1953), Supervision, A Social Process (Burton, 1955), Supervision as Cooperative Action (Crosby, 1957), Supervision as Leadership (Franseth, 1961), Personalized Supervision: Sources and Insights (Berman, 1966), Clinical Supervision (Cogan, 1972), Instructional Supervision: A Behavior System (Alfonso, Firth and Neville, 1975), Supervision: Human Perspectives (Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1979), Creative Supervision (Gillespie, 1981), Consultant Supervision (Champagne and Hogan, 1981), Differentiated Supervision (Glatthorn, 1984), Supervision of Instruction: A Developmental Approach (Glickman, 1985).

The issue here, of course, is to attend to the modifiers of "supervision" in the book titles. I offer only an analytical hypothesis or two and invite the reader to make his or her own interpretation. First, the field of supervision, much like the school system as a whole, tends to reflect and take on as jargon that which is current in the society, at large. The book titles, in some measure, tell us this. It is probably true, for example, that the next book on supervision will not have "democratic" in its title though I would not be too surprised to see a title that somehow manages to have "information systems" in it. Second, what we think and write about and the titles we give our books are in no small measure influenced by book publishers and they, too, are cued in to what is current.

What can be learned from this brief review of "the language of supervision" as it has been considered here? Primarily, at least for me, it has been to develop some sense of humility and modesty about my

work. The problems of supervision in the schools, the ways in which these problems are conceived and talked about about seem to have a long history. In a very real way, many of the problems that persist today in the field of supervision are not dissimilar from those dealt with over the years. If this is not a particularly enlightening comment it may be, at least, sobering to the extent that it helps us understand (1) that what we are about admits of no generalized solutions, and (2) that there may be a sort of joyful mystery to our work which, while sometimes frustrating also provides a challenge to our wits and our skills in a way that makes life interesting.

And here is a final thought. What would happen if a supervisor, in Rip Van Winkle style, went to sleep around 1900 and woke up some 85 years later. Would he or she find any brand-new insights as a result of the writing about and study of school supervision that has occurred over these years? With the exception of our having pretty much discarded the "born to be a leader" notion, I am forced to conclude that, for the most part, the answer is in the negative; that the basic concepts of what supervision is and how it should be practiced were developed, albeit informally, quite some years ago and they seem to have withstood well the test of time. At the same time, it is probably fair to say that these tests have not been rigorous ones. In any event, it does seem clear to me that anyone interested could read and study what our supervisor forebears wrote about and, for the most part, feel quite compatible with it.

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